

Pay.gov Frequently Asked Questions: Forms Acceptance and Direct Billing

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1. What forms functionality does Pay.gov provide?

Pay.gov can enable an agency's paper forms for electronic acceptance by Pay.gov. These forms will be Web pages on which information is entered manually. Pay.gov will:

- Make Web forms mirror the paper forms, to the extent of including Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and agency control numbers, Paperwork Reduction Act and Privacy Act notices, and instructions.
- Allow end-users to save forms before submitting to Pay.gov for acceptance.
- Implement form-specific business rules to auto-calculate fields and handle errors.
- Pre-populate forms based upon information passed by the access control service, which can include a limited amount of agency-specific information.

2. What bills functionality does Pay.gov provide?

Pay.gov can present an agency's bills (or notices or statements, which essentially are zero-dollar bills) and allow for payment of bills through Pay.gov. Pay.gov will:

- Make Web bills mirror the paper bills, to the extent of including OMB and agency control numbers, Paperwork Reduction Act and Privacy Act notices, and instructions.
 - Allow end-users to save bills before submitting to Pay.gov for acceptance (if the agency chooses to allow the bill to be editable), and allow for the viewing of bills in portable document format (PDF).
 - If editable, implement bill-specific business rules to handle errors.
 - Provide notification of incoming bills to end-users.
- 3. When filling out the agency configuration template (ACT), can more than one form or bill be addressed?**

No. A separate ACT must be completed for each form or bill.

4. Does my agency need to provide a copy of the form or bill to Pay.gov?

Yes. The agency needs to provide Pay.gov with an electronic copy of the form or bill when completing Pay.gov’s agency configuration template, preferably as a portable document format (PDF) file. In addition, the agency is asked to complete the “Agency Form or Bill Field Data” worksheet that is part of the agency configuration template, which provides Pay.gov with detailed information for each annotated field on the paper copy. This will be used as a guide to assist Pay.gov in rendering the form or bill.

5. Does the bills functionality apply to any other applications?

Yes. If the agency has statements that they need to deliver to an end-user, the bills service can be used for this purpose, even if no collection is involved.

6. How does Pay.gov render forms and bills?

Pay.gov uses commercial, off-the-shelf technology to render forms and bills. Separate technologies are used for forms and bills (Accelio for forms, Actuate for bills). Though separate, each provides a workstation tool to assist us in the creation of form templates and a server tool that assists in automatically rendering forms across multiple browsers. Forms generally will be rendered in DHTML on Internet Explorer and in Java on Netscape. Bills are rendered in DHTML for both browsers.

7. Who is responsible for enabling the forms and bills?

While a financial agent may be used for gathering requirements, the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland has responsibility for creating the form and bill templates. Contractor may be used for any additional work to implement the form or bills.

8. How is information about forms and bill transactions sent to my agency?

See the section on connectivity for how data is to be sent to the agency.

9. Will Pay.gov accept information about forms to Pay.gov for pre-population?

Not at the present time. All information about forms must be contained as part of the template itself, except for pre-population from attributes passed through Pay.gov's access control service.

10. Can Pay.gov handle forms or bills that require linkage to other forms or bills, such as accompanying schedules?

No. Pay.gov's forms and bills functionality handles all forms and bills separately. It does not link forms or bills together.

11. Can Pay.gov handle forms or bills of dynamic sizes?

No. Pay.gov can only host forms and bills of a set length. Some forms sometimes provide fields for the entry of information, and then require that additional information that does not fit in the fields be included on a separate piece of paper. However, Pay.gov can neither dynamically increase the number of fields nor link to an additional form to capture the information.

12. How will end-users access forms and bills on Pay.gov?

End-users can view a list of forms on Pay.gov without being logged in, but any attempt to access a form will require the end-user successfully obtain permission through Pay.gov's access control service, if the agency desires. Access to saved forms also will require invocation of access control. Bills will always require invocation of access control and will be viewable by agency and by status.

13. Is there an ability to pay multiple bills from the same application at once?

Yes, so long as the bills have not been edited by the end-user. If a bill has been edited, then the end-user must pay that bill separately.

14. Do end-users have an ability to cancel collections related to forms and bills?

Yes. This is especially true for future-dated collections. However, once the collection is in process, it cannot be cancelled through Pay.gov.

15. Does an end-user need to be enrolled in Pay.gov to use its billing services?

Not always. An agency can send billing information to Pay.gov even if an end-user is not enrolled. However, the agency must send an e-mail address as part of this information to Pay.gov if the end-user is to receive a e-mail notice of a bill from Pay.gov. In addition, the agency will be responsible for authenticating the end-user. Once authenticated, the agency will securely redirect the end-user to Pay.gov to view the end-user's bills. Otherwise, the end-user must be enrolled.

16. If an agency needs Pay.gov to return billing information for unenrolled end-users back to the agency for printing of paper bills, can Pay.gov do so?

Yes, but Pay.gov will use the same manner and method of connectivity to have unused billing information returned to the agency as was used to obtain the information in the first instance.

17. How can end-users enroll on Pay.gov for direct billing?

End-users can self-enroll on Pay.gov or be enrolled through an agency administrator. An end-user will use a Pay.gov username and password if accessing Pay.gov through these methods.

18. What options does my agency have with regard to when it will receive information about a transaction?

The agency can choose whether to receive the information when a transaction occurs or when any collection amounts have settled.

19. How much flexibility will my agency have in the how forms and bills are rendered?

To ensure there is no need to obtain new OMB control numbers and to provide a readily available comparison, Pay.gov will render forms and bills to resemble their paper counterparts in both appearance and substance. Pay.gov will not deviate from this approach unless exceptional circumstances warrant it. For instance, a very long or wide form may have to be broken into multiple, Wizard-style pages.

20. Why isn't it mandatory to have a form or bill be payable on Pay.gov if an amount is due?

Some agencies may have legacy collection solutions in place and simply want to Web-enable the form or bill for presentment without (immediately) disrupting the legacy collection solution.

21. If a bill is editable, is it any different than a form?

Yes, though the distinction becomes blurred. Bills are distinguishable from forms in that bills are traditionally pushed out to the end-user, whereas forms passively await an end-user's action. Bills typically are editable to a much lesser extent than forms. On Pay.gov, another distinction is that forms generally are routable, but bills are not.

22. Will Pay.gov enable internal workflows inside my agency, to assist with the processing of forms and bills after they are accepted by Pay.gov?

No, this is outside of the scope of Pay.gov. Pay.gov is aimed at facilitating transactions with the public, not within agencies.

23. Will Pay.gov enable forms or bills used for intra-governmental transactions?

No. Pay.gov is aimed at facilitating transactions with the public, not between agencies.

24. Will Pay.gov enable forms and bills that do not have collections associated with them?

Yes, to a limited extent. We recognize that agencies do not want two solutions for processing forms and bills, which would otherwise be the case for non-collection items if we focused exclusively on agency forms and bills that are associated with collections. However, the primary focus of Pay.gov is on collections and we may decline to enable forms and bills if there are no collections involved with the work we are being asked to perform.

25. Can Pay.gov display multi-page bills?

Yes and no. The template must be same from one page to the next; however, if the amount of data is large, the data can be displayed over multiple pages.

26. Can Pay.gov display bar codes?

This may be possible in some instances.